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Sen. Kuipers' legislation aiding nursing mothers clears Senate

LANSING – Nursing mothers would be exempt from jury duty if they receive a doctor's note under legislation sponsored by Sen. Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, that unanimously passed the Michigan Senate on Tuesday.

"Other states already have similar family-friendly legislation and it's time Michigan does as well," Kuipers said. "We should give nursing moms the ability to be with their babies if they choose. Separating mother and child for an extended time unnecessarily burdens both."

Kuipers introduced the bill after hearing from local leaders of the La Leche League of Holland and Zeeland. Under Kuipers' proposal, nursing women could be excused from jury duty if they provide a note from a physician or certified nurse midwife.

La Leche member Denise Radakovitz of Holland testified in support of the legislation and hailed its passage.

"This bill stresses the importance of the breast-feeding relationship and gives a mother a choice to serve or postpone jury duty during the time she is nursing," Radakovitz said.

The legislation, Senate Bill 519, now heads to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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